

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DHA-02 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 VO-03

SCA-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 PRS-01 USIE-00 INRE-00 /059 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7097

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 6002

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, AR (ALVAREZ, PEDRO)

SUBJECT: LABOR INFORMATION: REPORTED ARREST OF PEDRO ALVAREZ

REF: (A) STATE 227380; (B) BUENOS AIRES 5917

1. FORMER MEAT WORKER LEADER AND EX-HEAD OF CGT INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT ELUTERIO CARDOSO, WHO ALSO PARTICIPATED IN SEPTEMBER 10 CONVERSATION WITH LABATT CONCERNING ALVAREZ (PARA 1, REFTEL B) RECONFIRMED TODAY (SEPTEMBER 15) THAT THE INFORMATION WHICH REACHED TRADE UNION LEADERS WAS THAT ALVAREZ HAD BEEN DETAINED BY THE AUTHORITIES, AND NOT REPEAT NOT THAT HE HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED BY ERP. (NOTE: IN RELAYING THE INFORMATION SEPTEMBER 10 CONCERNING ALVAREZ'S ALLEGED DETENTION, ELORZA CLAIMED THAT IT WAS BASED ON A TIP RECEIVED FROM A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE INSIDE SIDE, THE ARMY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE. EMBASSY PERCEIVES NO OBJECTION TO DEPARTMENT'S PASSING ALONG POINT REGARDING ALLEGED SOURCE OF ELORZA'S INFORMATION TO AFL-CIO, AS LONG AS MCLELLAN IS REQUESTED NOT TO REVEAL HE AWARE OF THIS SENSITIVE DETAIL IN ANY CONVERSATION HE MAY HAVE WITH ELORZA. OF COURSE, WE WOULD ENCOURAGE MCLELLAN TO QUERY ELORZA HIMSELF REGARDING THE SOURCE OF HIS INFORMATION, IF MCLELLAN PLANS TO CONTACT ELORZA DIRECTLY.)

2. ON BASIS OF PHONE CALL SEPTEMBER 14 FROM DEPARTMENT
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ANTICIPATING INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REFTEL A, LABATT

RAISED ALVAREZ ISSUE WITH LABOR MINISTER GENERAL LIENDO THAT EVENING. LABATT DESCRIBED ALVAREZ AS A FIGURE PROMINENT IN DEMOCRATIC INTERNAL TRADE UNION CIRCLES IN THE HEMIS- QHERE, BEING THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE INTER-AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT WORKERS FEDERATION (FITE), IN WHICH CAPACITY HE HAD DEVELOPED STRONG FRATERNAL AND PERSONAL TIES WITH THE AFL-CIO. LABOR MINISTER ALSO WAS INFORMED OF THE GRAVE CONCERN WHICH THE AFL-CIO HAD FOR BROTHER ALVAREZ'S LIFE AND WELL-BEING AND THE URGENCY WITH WHICH THE AFL-CIO WAS TREATING THE INFORMATION WHICH IT HAD RECEIVED CONCERNING ALVAREZ'S ALLEGED KIDNAPPING BY THE ERP. THE MINISTER SAID HE HAD SEEN A REPORT (APPARENTLY IN HIS OFFICIAL DAILY BRIEFING PAPERS) TO THE EFFECT THAT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO ALVAREZ ON THE "COSTANERA" (WHICH MATCHES OUR INFORMATION), BUT HE "COULD NOT RECALL THE DETAILS." HE DID NOT CONFIRM THAT ALVAREZ HAD BEEN DETAINED BY AN OFFICIAL SERVICE OF THE GOVERNMENT, BUT HIS MANNER SUGGESTED THAT THE REPORT HE HAD SEEN IN NO WAY SUGGESTED KIDNAPPING BY THE ERP EITHER. LABATT TOLD MINISTER THAT IF HE COULD CONFIRM THAT ALVAREZ WAS "IN GOOD HANDS," THIS WOULD HELP MATTERS CONSIDERABLY. MINISTER PROMISED TO CHECK AND REPORT BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ON THIS MATTER. IN THE MEANTIME, HE SAID, TELL THE AFL-CIO NOT PAY ANY RANSOM.

3. DURING ANOTHER PART OF THE CONVERSATION TOUCHING ON THE GENERAL TRADE UNION SCENE, LIENDO MADE PERTINENT POINT THAT HE, AND HIS GOVERNMENT, WERE VERY GRATEFUL TO THE ICFTU AND THE AFL-CIO FOR THE COMPREHENSION THESE ORGANIZATIONS HAD SHOWN FOR THE EMERGENCY MEASURES WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAD HAD TO INTRODUCE IN CONNECTION WITH THE LABOR MOVEMENT, AND THAT HE WAS WORKING TO NORMALIZE THE TRADE UNION SITUATION "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE." (FURTHER DETAILS BEING POUCHED BY MEMCON.)

4. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE LEARNING MORE ABOUT HOW AND WHEN GUTTENBERG OBTAINED INFORMATION HE CARRIED WITH HIM TO NY. GUTTENBERG VISITED LABATT SEPTEMBER 9 TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING VISA TO VISIT FAMILY IN US. DURING MORNING SEPTEMBER 10 HE TELEPHONED FORMER LABATT'S SECRETARY REQUESTING HER ASSISTANCE IN RETRIEVING PASSPORT FROM CONSULAR

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SECTION BECAUSE "SOMETHING URGENT HAD COME UP." SHE ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY PROBLEM AND HE RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD EXPLAIN ON SOME OTHER OCCASION. HE DID NOT REQUEST TO SEE LABATT, GAVE NO FURTHER EXPLANATION, NOR DID HE EXPLICITLY SAY HE WAS TRAVELING URGENTLY TO THE U.S. LABATT SOUGHT TO CONTACT GUTTENBERG IN LATE AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 10 AFTER REFERENCED MEETING WITH MESSRS. ELORZA, DONAIRES AND CARDOSO. GUTTENBERG RETURNED CALL AROUND MID-MORNING FOLLOWING DAY. GUTTENBERG

CONFIRMED THAT ALVAREZ WAS MISSING AND ASKED FOR SOURCE OF OUR INFORMATION THAT HE HAD BEEN DETAINED BY AUTHORITIES. LABATT SAID IT WAS A TRADE UNION SOURCE, COULD NOT GIVE FURTHER DETAILS OVER PHONE BUT WOULD BE PLEASED IF GUTTENBERG WOULD COME IN FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER. GUTTENBERG SAID HE WOULD DO SO "WITHIN A FEW DAYS." HE SAID NOTHING ABOUT ERP OR THAT HE WAS TRAVELING TO U.S. (HE EVIDENTLY DEPARTED BY PLANE SUNDAY EVENING.)

5. ELORZA HAS JUST RECONFIRMED BY PHONE THAT HIS INFORMATION OF SEPTEMBER 10 WAS IN SENSE THAT ALVAREZ HAD BEEN DETAINED BY AUTHORITIES. HE DOUBTED THAT ALVAREZ HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED BY ERP, BUT WOULD CHECK FURTHER AND REPORT BACK. (LABATT DID NOT INFORM ELORZA ABOUT RANSOM DEMAND.)

6. EMBASSY ALSO SEEKING THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS TO DETERMINE ALVAREZ'S WHEREABOUTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, ARRESTS, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BUENOS06002
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760348-0520
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760960/aaaabypw.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 227380, 76 BUENOS AIRES 5917
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <28 OCT 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR INFORMATION: REPORTED ARREST OF PEDRO ALVAREZ
TAGS: ELAB, AR, US, AFL-CIO, FITE, (ALVAREZ, PEDRO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006